

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Higher Hopes!





HIGHER HOPES! MISSION

Higher Hopes! is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation which serves food insecure families in Metro Detroit with children enrolled in Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Programs (Early Head Start, Head Start, and Great Start Readiness). Established in 2014, the goal of Higher Hopes! is to inspire independence, relieve food anxiety, and encourage family meals together by providing a bounty of food in nutritious, multiple-meal food kits throughout the year.

2025

IN REVIEW

In 2025, Higher Hopes! stepped up in a big way as we saw more and more of our Head Start families struggling to make ends meet, facing impossible choices between food, housing, and basic necessities. But because of your support, we didn't just maintain our impact – we grew it. Our holiday programs continued to be cornerstones of hope with our Labor Day BBQ and “1,000 Turkeys, 10,000 Smiles” Thanksgiving event bringing stability and relief to Detroit families during critical times of the year. At the same time, our Weekend PowerPack program truly took off, becoming a lifeline for children who might otherwise go hungry when school is not in session. This year has shown us that the need is real and growing – but so is our community's ability to respond with compassion and action. Thank you for being a part of our community and showing what it truly means to be a Higher Hopes! Hero!

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LABOR DAY & THANKSGIVING

Labor Day BBQ Overview

The Higher Hopes! Labor Day BBQ once again brought the community together to close out the summer on a high note, providing 1,000 Head Start families with everything they needed to enjoy a festive end-of-season cookout at home. In its 5th year, distributions occurred at three Head Start sites around Detroit. Each family received BBQ essentials and fresh food items, helping to relieve financial pressure while creating an opportunity for celebration over the holiday weekend.



Special thanks to Gleaners Food Bank, SEEL LLC, and Michigan Humane for their support with our events!



"1,000 Turkey, 10,000" Smiles Overview

Our "1,000 Turkeys, 10,000 Smiles" Thanksgiving event marked its 12th year of bringing comfort and joy to families across Detroit, and this year's effort was more meaningful than ever. In addition to providing a full Thanksgiving meal kits (with everything from the turkey to dessert), Head Start families also received \$50 Meijer gift cards, high-efficiency lightbulbs to help lower utility costs, and pet food generously provided by Michigan Humane. Higher Hopes! also extended support to the people who care for underprivileged children every day by distributing 200 gift cards to Head Start staff facing their own hardships. This large-scale effort was powered by the dedication of more than 200 volunteers, whose time and heart made it possible to deliver not just meals, but relief, dignity, and thousands of smiles.



WEEKEND POWERPACKS

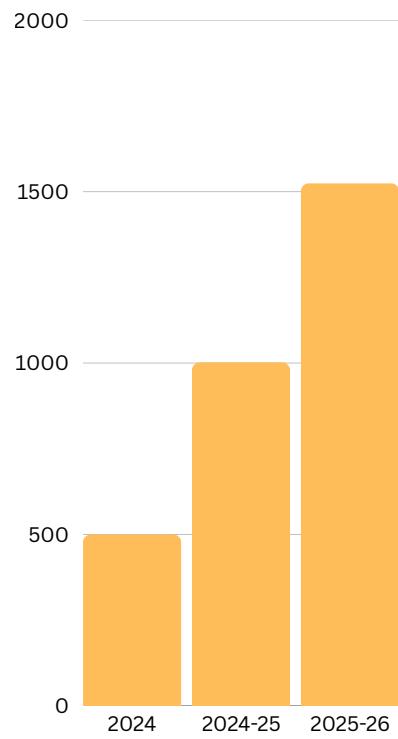
Overview

The Weekend PowerPack program continues to be a powerful source of support for Head Start children facing food insecurity. At the beginning of 2025 this program served 1,002 students across 4 Head Starts, but for the 2025-26 school year the program has expanded to reach 1,524 students across 6 Head Starts around the city. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, as students are excited to receive their PowerPacks, parents share how the extra food eases stressors at home, and the Head Start staff consistently express gratitude for a program that helps their families stay nourished and ready to learn.

Reported benefits:

- Higher attendance on distribution days than on other school days
- Fewer behavioral challenges
- Better attentiveness and focus
- Less food disparity

Program Growth



"The parents are always very thankful and appreciate the sentiment that we care about their child even after they are leaving our facility. They are always happy to make their child happy, and the children are very excited when getting their weekend snack kit."

~Taylor White, United Children and Family Head Start

"The parents have stated that the children feel special because of the PowerPacks."

~Stephanie Kendrick, Focus: HOPE

SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAMS

Overview

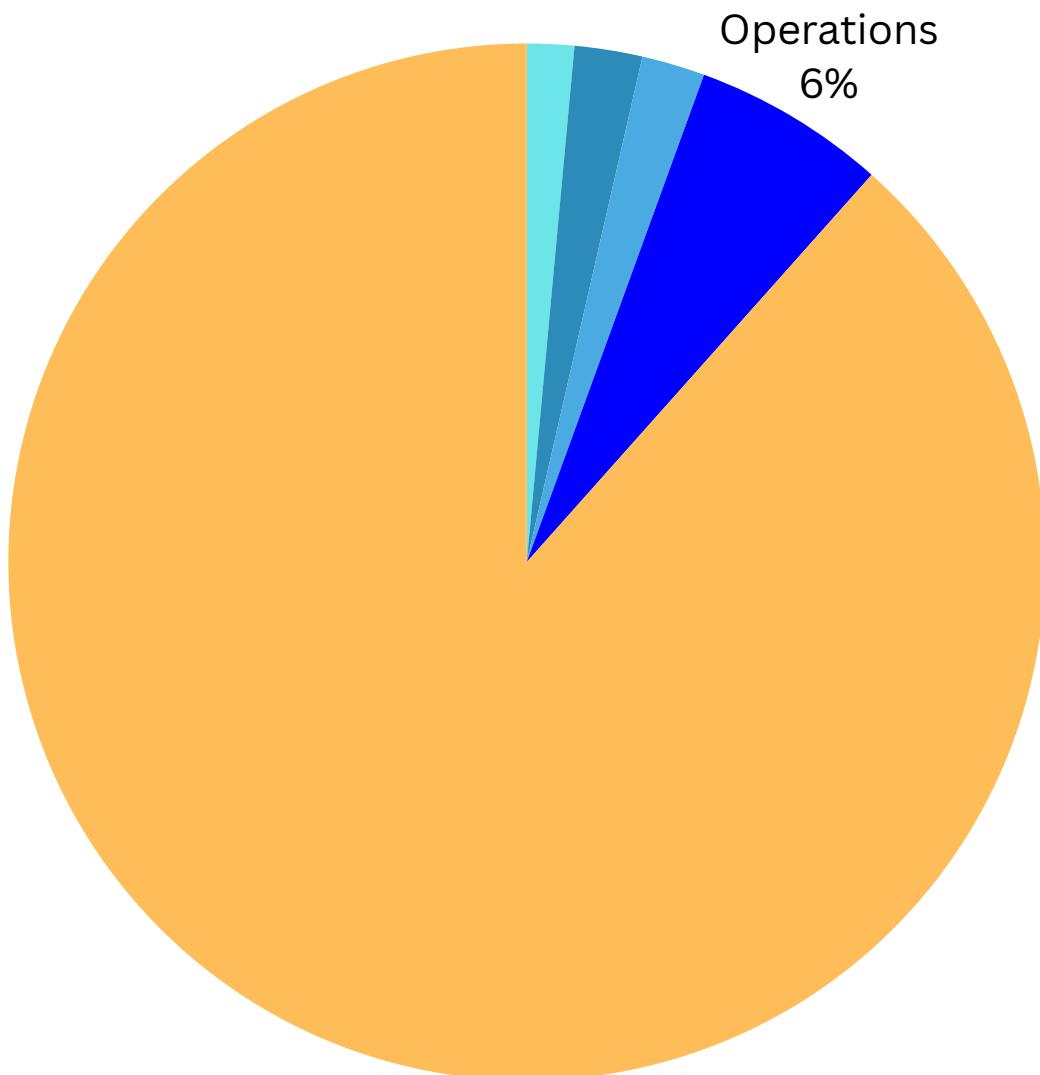
Beyond our work in metro Detroit, Higher Hopes! extends its impact across Michigan by supplementing summer feeding programs. Partnering with the Food Bank Council of Michigan, we help supply fresh produce to all seven food banks in the state, helping to bridge the gap when school meals are not available. In 2025, we distributed 100,800 2 oz packages of fresh apple slices, helping to give children and families across Michigan greater access to healthy, ready-to-eat food during the summer months.



According to Feeding America, 1,544,250 people in Michigan are facing hunger - and of them 402,680 are children.

TOTAL EXPENSES

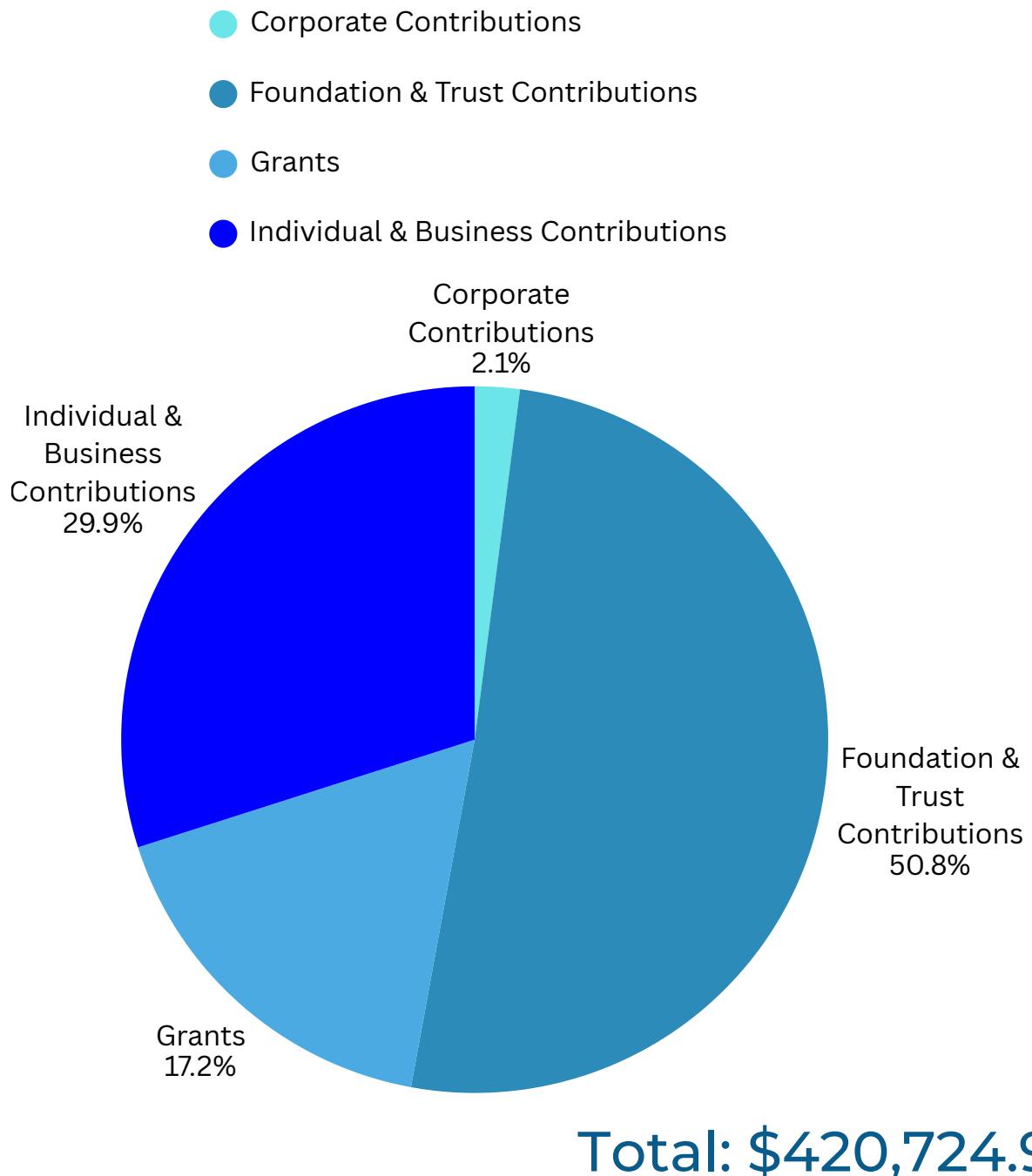
- Business Expenses
- Contract Services
- Facilities & Equipment
- Operations
- Food Purchases



Food Purchases
88.4%

Total: \$165,402.70

TOTAL INCOME



Thanks to a generous gift from the D. Dan & Betty Kahn Foundation, Higher Hopes! is well set up to keep expanding our efforts and reach more people through our programs.

THANK YOU

We are endlessly grateful to the incredible volunteers and devoted Head Start staff who make this work possible. Your compassion, patience, and willingness to step in wherever needed are what turn our meal kits into comfort, stability, and care for the children and families we serve. Whether you're packing, distributing, or supporting students in the classroom, you're the steady, caring presence behind every meal and every smile. Higher Hopes! simply could not do this without you - you are the heart of it all.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 DONORS!

Super-duper hero (\$25,000+)

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Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
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